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SWsoft Upgrades Virtualization Software

By **Peter Galli** - January 7, 2002

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An increasing number of software makers are bringing technology to market that gives customers mainframelike functionality across a variety of architectures and platforms. The latest offering on this front comes from SWsoft Inc., a San Francisco-based server and networking software technology company.

SWsoft on Tuesday will release Virtuozzo 2.0, an upgrade of its software that essentially allows hundreds of virtual environments–instances of the Linux operating system–to run on a single, commodity Intel-based server.

While the software is currently compatible only with the Linux and FreeBSD operating systems, it will be expanded to include Sun Microsystems Inc. Solaris operating environment in the first half of this year and Microsoft Corp.s Windows operating system later in the year, SWsoft CEO Serguei Beloussov told eWEEK.

Virtuozzo 2.0 provides companies of any size with e-mail, firewalls, domain name service and other functionalities found in the enterprise.

It is also the technology that powers SWsofts HSPcomplete, a full-lifecycle hosting automation solution that gives Web hosters a business director, provider tools, end-user tools and reseller tools that allow them to develop a multitier VAR channel. HSPcomplete Version 2.0 is set for release in March, he said.

The Virtuozzo 2.0 release includes new features like multi-tenancy, where hundreds of customers share a single, physical server, even though to them it appears as if they have their own dedicated environment.

It also virtualizes CPU resources and appears to customers as a stand-alone, dedicated server; offers resource management, which allows systems administrators to control the customer resource levels and offer service-level agreements and quality of service guarantees; as well as clustering, which lets customers transparently move in-between servers, without affecting the quality of the network, Beloussov said.

SWsoft currently has nine customers using the 1.0 version of its product, and all will be upgrading to 2.0, he said. One of these is Hostica, a Web hosting company based in Redondo Beach, Calif. It has upgraded to 2.0 internally and is currently training its technicians on the technology before rolling it out, Chief Technology Officer Gregor Loock told eWEEK in an interview.

"The greatest attraction of Version 2.0 is that it appears far more like a real dedicated server when compared to 1.0. When you look at the box you have no   and I can now give my customers the

illusion that they have a dedicated server without having to pay huge hardware costs.

"It is also a far more affordable solution than its competitors," Loock said. Hostica currently hosts about 15,000 domains, which translates into some 8,000 customers.

The SWsoft news follows similar recent moves by Sun and VMware Inc. Sun plans to add new "service container" technology to the virtualization features of Solaris 9 Beta 2, which is expected later this quarter. Final code is expected in the second quarter.

The container is in essence a partition of the Solaris operating system itself, which can be "carved" into little pieces that can then each run individual applications.

VMware also recently announced that its enterprise server software solution, ESX Server, is fully optimized to run on some Intel-based IBM eServer xSeries systems, including the x350 and the x370.

Its server software enables businesses to dynamically partition their physical servers into multiple secure virtual computers. Each virtual computer is configured with its own operating system, applications and network identity.

SWsofts Beloussov said the Virtuozzo software gives service providers the flexibility to offer service-level agreements and affordable dedicated server plans. "As the Internet more deeply permeates the fabric of traditional business, small and medium-sized businesses will need a more sophisticated Web presence. Virtuozzo 2.0 enables Web hosting companies to offer a wide range of shared and dedicated server capabilities, at lower price points," he said.

Peter Galli

Peter Galli has been a financial/technology reporter for 12 years at leading publications in South Africa, the UK and the US. He has been Investment Editor of South Africa's Business Day Newspaper, the sister publication of the Financial Times of London.He was also Group Financial Communications Manager for First National Bank, the second largest banking group in South Africa before moving on to become Executive News Editor of Business Report, the largest daily financial newspaper in South Africa, owned by the global Independent Newspapers group.He was responsible for a national reporting team of 20 based in four bureaus. He also edited and contributed to its weekly technology page, and launched a financial and technology radio service supplying daily news bulletins to the national broadcaster, the South African Broadcasting Corporation, which were then distributed to some 50 radio stations across the country.He was then transferred to San Francisco as Business Report's U.S. Correspondent to cover Silicon Valley, trade and finance between the US, Europe and emerging markets like South Africa. After serving that role for more than two years, he joined eWeek as a Senior Editor, covering software platforms in August 2000.He has comprehensively covered Microsoft and its Windows and .Net platforms, as well as the many legal challenges it has faced. He has also focused on Sun Microsystems and its Solaris operating environment, Java and Unix offerings. He covers developments in the open source community, particularly around the Linux kernel and the effects it will have on the enterprise.He has written extensively about new products for the Linux and Unix platforms, the development of open standards and critically looked at the potential Linux has to offer an alternative operating system and platform to Windows, .Net and Unix-based solutions like Solaris.His interviews with senior industry executives include Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer, Linus Torvalds, the original developer of the Linux operating system, Sun CEO Scot McNealy, and Bill Zeitler, a senior vice president at IBM.For numerous examples of his writing you can search under his name at the eWEEK Website at www.eweek.com.

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